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REPORT FROM WASHINGTON

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Washington
Scandal Sandal
Now on the
Other Foot

WASHINGTON, March 20—Politics is often a business of ox goring, and the bellowing — Republican or Democratic—depends upon whose ox is being gored.

At the moment, Democrats, such as Sen. B. Everett Jordan [D., N. C.] are striking attitudes of political martyrs and screaming "brass knuckle" and "back alley" politics against Republican attacks on the conduct of the investigation of Robert G. [Bobby] Baker's finances. The influence operations of the former secretary of the Democratic Senate majority are a political atomic bomb of megaton proportions.

A few years back the scandal sandal was on the other foot when Sherman Adams, the No. 1 White House assistant under President Eisenhower, was charged with exerting influence on federal agencies in behalf of his then wealthy industrialist friend, Bernard Goldfine. Republicans shouted that Adams had been "unfairly treated" by a heavily Democratic congressional investigating committee, "cruelly smeared by vindictive hate mongers" and "whiplashed more brutally than any man in public life in our generation."

At the beginning of the second half of this century, when scandals were busting out all over the administration of Harry S. Truman, Democrats were protesting the dismissal of influence peddlers as "grave injustice" and "wrongful treatment." They were yelling "foul" at every body blow in creating what Adlai E. Stevenson, the party's Presidential nominee, was forced to acknowledge as "the mess in Washington."

Both Parties Have Their Scandals

SCANDALS ARE NOT PECULIAR to any party or any political level—federal, state, or local. Men who are model husbands, good fathers, and devoted churchmen often take a curious and inexplicable moral attitude toward public money

and public trust. Some see no wrong in stealing public funds, and more have no qualms about profiting from political decisions or influence.

In the Baker case, inside knowledge and influence was built into a personal fortune. No doubt Baker was influenced by a rather free congressional approach to conflicts of interest. Several legislators are men of great wealth, whose personal fortunes have not suffered by their seats in high places. More often than not, conflicts of interest involve no law breaking.

However, they involve morality, and politicians do not define morality except to orate against sin—usually the sins of the opposition party. The Baker case skirted on thin moral ice in the operation of a Capitol hill house that was not a home; a club at which favored legislators were encouraged to relax, and an array of questionable activities, if rumor can be credited.

German Woman Leaves Untold Tale

ONE CAN UNDERSTAND that Democrats are anxious to end an inquiry which could involve very important people in very embarrassing company as well as curious financial operations. Last fall a young German woman, who was regarded as a kiss-and-tell security risk, was forced to return to her homeland.

The young and curvaceous woman, Ellen Rometsch, the wife of a German army sergeant who was attached to the German embassy, was "reassigned" at the request of the American state department. When she was traced to her parents' farm home in Wuppertal, Germany, reporters were warned off by a farm hand who brandished a shot gun.

Ellen is reported to have bragged about numerous affairs, as a glamorous Baker party girl, with high federal officials in and out of Congress. She was spirited away before she could be questioned. She was divorced by her husband, Sgt. Rolf Rometsch, reportedly for her gayety with high figures. Altho she has denied the reports, it would seem that the American people have a right to hear the denials from a witness stand or to hear her plead the fifth amendment.



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